

Message Text

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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ASMARA,
MOGADISCIO, MOSCOW, USCINCEUR, NAIROBI, ROME, HONG KONG,
KHARTOUM, RABAT, USUN NEW YORK MARCH 19, 1973 FROM ADDIS
ABABA IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 3191

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PBOR, PFOR, MARA, MASS, MCAP, ET, SO, UR

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH ETHIOPIAN FONMIN: ETHIO- SOMALI RELATIONS

REF: ADDIS 3179

DR. MINASSIE DEVOTED BULK TOUR D' HORIZON TO REVIEW OF TEHIO-
SOMALI RELATIONS. HE SPOKE GENERALLY AND WITH GREAT SERIOUSNESS
ALONG FAMILIAR LINES, LEAVING NO DOUBT OF GRAVITY SITUATION AS
SEEN FROM HERE.
HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW:

1. SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES TO GSDR HAVE CREATED VERY SERIOUS
SITUATION. ETHIOPIAN FORCES NOW OUTCLASSED, OUTGUNNED AND OUT-
NUMBERED IN SEVERAL KEY SECTORS (E. G., ARMOR, AIRCRAFT, AA ARTY,
RADARS). ACCUMULATION OF WEAPONRY IN SOMALI ARSENALS FAR IN
EXCESS OF WHAT IS NEEDED TO DEFEND COUNTRY. SOVIETS HAD CLEARLY
DECIDED PUT THEIR EGGS INTO SOMALI BASKET. FOREGOING, WHEN
COMBINED WITH EXPRESSIONS OF GSDR INTRANSIGANCE AND DEMAND FOR
CESSION OF ETHIOPIAN OGADEN, HAD RAISED IEG CONCERNS TO UNPRECE-
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DENTED HEIGHT. HE HOPED USG BEGINNING UNDERSTAND THIS CONCERN
REAL AND NOT " MERELY POLITICAL TALK".

2. FONMIN NOW THINKING OF GOING TO SOVIET UNION TO DISCUSS EFFECTS OF SOVIET ACTIONS. HE HAS, OF COURSE, RAISED SUBJECT WITH SOV REPRESENTATIVES HERE, AND PRIMIN AKLILU HAD SPOKEN OF IT WITH PODGORNYY. SOVIETS HAD TAKEN LINE THAT ARMS SUPPLIED SOMALIA INTENDED FOR DEFENSE AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACK BY US AND/ OR ISRAEL. GSDR HAD SIGNED AGREEMENT NOT RPT NOT TO USE THEM AGAINST ETHIOPIA, BUT USSR OF COURSE UNABLE CONTROL GSDR'S DECISIONS THIS RESPECT. NOR IS THIS ALL. SOVIETS ALSO AMPLIFY ETHIOPIA LEANS TO WEST. THEY REMIND IEG IT TAKING ARMS FROM US AND ASSERT US DELIVERING MORE TO ETHIOPIA THAN SOVIETS TO SOMALIA. " YOU KNOW THAT ISN'T TRUE." SOVIETS SAY IEG USES ITS INFLUENCE AGAINST THEM, TAX IT WITH NON- USE SOVIET CREDITS (ONLY 1/3 DRAWN DOWN) AND WITH PRESENCE KAGNEW ON ITS SOIL. PODGORNYY TOLD AKLILU " WHY NOT ASK US FOR ARMS AND SEE WHO GETS MOST?" TRUTH IS SOVIETS KNOW WE WILL NOT CHANGE OUR ATTITUDE AND HAVE SET OUT FORCE OUR HAND, MINASSIE SAID. THEY ARE MOTIVATED BY THEIR INTEREST IN RED SEA/ INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND BY DESIRE WIDEN THEIR FOOTHOLD IN EAST AFRICA.

3. COOTE EMPHASIZED DESIRABILITY TALKING WITH SOVIETS AGAIN ABOUT PRESENT CONCERNS RE SOMALI- ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. HE EXPRESSED WASHINGTON ASSESSMENT THAT SOME OF EQUIPMENT DELIVERED INTENDED TO REPLACE WORN OUT ITEMS AND MUCH OF EQUIPMENT DEFENSIVE IN NATURE. AMONG OTHER THINGS, SOVIETS, WHO HAVE SUFFERED LOSSES IN AFRICA, APPEAR HAVE EYE ON CHINESE IN SOMALIA. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING CPR MADE OFFER OF MILAID TO GSDR IF LATTER PREPARED NOT TO BE SO TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON SOVIETS. THIS NO DOUBT FACTOR IN STIMULATING SOVIET RESPONSE. WE DO NOT RPT NOT THINK SOVIETS DESIRE SUPPORT GSDR AGGRESSION AGAINST NEIGHBORS. SOVIETS AWARE IEG'S INFLUENCE IN AFRICA AND BOUND LISTEN TO ITS REPRESENTATIONS.

4. US ALSO WANTS PEACE IN HORN, AS DOES ETHIOPIA, IT DOES NOT FAVOR ARMS RACE. WASHINGTON GENERALLY OF VIEW THAT IEG SUFFICIENTLY EQUIPPED AND PREPARED TO COPE WITH ANY SOMALI MOVE. SOMALI FORCES ALSO SUFFER FROM LOGISTIC WEAKNESSES WHICH WELL KNOWN TO IEG. GSDR TELLS US IT ALSO WANTS PEACE AND IS DISCOURAGED BY APPARENT FAILURE ITS DIALOGUE WITH IEG. WHILE USG AGREES THAT ETHIOPIAN GRADUALIST CONFIDENCE- BUILDING APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL ISSUE MAKES BETTER SENSE, SOMALIS FELT TERRITORIAL
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PROBLEM SHOULD BE DEALT WITH WHILE HIM STILL RULES. GSDR HAS EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN TO US OVER ETHIOPIAN MILITARY BUILD UP IN OGADEN. IN USG'S VIEW THERE WOULD SEEM BE ADVANTAGE IEG LET GSDR KNOW THAT ETHIOPIAN MILITARY MOVES STRICTLY DEFENSIVE AND DIRECTLY RELATED SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES. ALSO SEEMS TIMELY REASSERT THAT ETHIOPIA HAS NO RPT NO TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS VIS- A- VIS SOMALIA (CF STATE 47993).

5. DR. MINASSIE THEN SAID THAT THERE NO RPT NO ETHIOPIAN TROOP

CONCENTRATIONS THREATENING SOMALIA. ETHIOPIAN DEPLOYMENTS ARE DEFENSIVE (CF. MOGADISCIO 378). GSDR HAD BEEN TOLD IEG NOT CONCENTRATING BUT REDEPLOYING FORCES, YET IT MAINTAINS ETHIOPIA PREPARING WAR. IN FACE EVER GROWING SOMALI ARSENALS WHICH NOW AT UN- HEARD- OF LEVELS, SOMALI INSISTENCE ON " SURRENDER OF OGADEN", GSDR' S APPETITE FOR OIL, ITS TRAINING OF GUERRILLAS, ITS REFUSAL WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM TWO POSITIONS ON ETHIOPIAN SOIL, IEG MUST TAKE WHAT PRECAUTIONS IT CAN. GSDR IS PREPARING GROUNDWORK FOR ATTACK ON ETHIOPIA " BEFORE WE ARE READY." IEG HAS NO RPT NO REASON ATTACK SOMALIA AND SOMALIA KNOWS THIS, BUT CONTRARY UNFORTUNATELY NOT CASE.

6. ETHIOPIA FINDS SINO-/ SOVIET RATIONALE NOT CONVINCING. SEEN FROM ADDIS, CRP CLEARLY AWARE WHICH IS KEY COUNTRY IN HORN, AND IEG/ CPR RELATIONS DEVELOPING FAVORABLY.

7. IEG' S INTELLIGENCE AS WELL AS FIGURES PUBLISHED BY INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS, SHOW STEEP RISE IN SOMALI MILITARY ASSETS. WHILE SOME COMPONENT SOVIET DELIVERIES MAY BE PROVIDED FOR REPLACEMENT PURPOSES, BULK ENHANCES GSDR' S POTENTIAL. EVEN DEFENSIVE ARMAMENTS SUCH AS AA AND READARS ERODE EARLIER BALANCING ETHIOPIAN ADVANTAGES (E. G. AIR) WITH INCREASINGLY DESTABILIZING EFFECT. AT PRESENT, ETHIOPIA IN POSITION ABSOLUTE MILITARY INFERIORITY. HE (MINASSIE) HAD SEEN MORE TANKS IN SINGLE MOGADISCIO MILITARY PARADE THAN THERE ARE IN ALL ETHIOPIA. IMPLICATIONS THIS SITUATION SERIOUS. WEAKNESS IN ETHIOPIA WILL TEMPT MOGADISCIO MAKE ITS MOVE. SURVIVAL OF ETHIOPIA NOW AT STAKE, IEG BELIEVES. BUT WHAT ARE HIM' S ALTERNATIVES? BALANCE MUST BE RESTORED. THAT IS WHY EMPEROR WANTS TO SEE PRESIDENT. IF IEG UNABLE DEFEND OGADEN AND SOMALIS ATTACK, PEOPLES OF ETHIOPIA WILL FEEL THAT EMPEROR HAS ALLOWED COUNTRY TO BECOME OVERDEPENDENT ON US TO ETHIOPIA' S DETRIMENT. SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR BOTH ETHIOPIAN AND AMERICAN POLITICAL INTERESTS
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WOULD LIKELY FOLLOW. EFFECTS COULD MAKE THEMSELVES FELT CLEAR TO MIDEAST AND BEYOND. YOUTH AND YOUNG OFFICERS ALREADY SAYING ETHIOPIA SHOULD ADOPT MORE " PROGRESSIVE" INTERNATIONAL POSTURE TO TAKE HEAT OFF ITSELF. IEG FEELS THERE MUST BE GREATER COOPERATION BETWEEN US AT THIS JUNCTURE. " WE LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP TO RESTORE PARITY ."

8. COOTE NOTED THAT USG IS ALSO CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPING SITUATION. HE HAD NOT INTENDED CONVEY THAT SINO- SOVIET RIVALRY SOLE FACTOR AT WORK. WASHINGTON DID, HOWEVER, FIND IT SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT BELIEVE THAT SOVIETS PREPARED JEOPARDIZE PEACE IN HORN. COOTE FELT CONVERSATION HAD BEEN ENLIGHTENING. HE WOULD REPORT CONVERSATION TO AMBASSADOR LOORAM AND SEEK HIS REACTION. SOVIETS SHOULD HAVE MEANS RESTRAIN SOMALIS, IF THEY WISHED. USG HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT NEITHER IEG NOR ANY GOVERNMENT LIKELY GIVE UP LARGE CHUNK ITS TERRITORY AND HAS URGED MOGADISCIO SEARCH FOR

PROGRESS IN SOMALI- ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS WHERE AND AS POSSIBLE.

9. DR. MINASSIE SAID THAT GSDR TRYING STALL FOR TIME. WHEN ITS
BUILDUP COMPLETE IT MIGHT MAKE PROPAGANDA PROPOSAL END ALL MILAID
TO REGION. MEANWHILE MOGADISCIO PRETENDING IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS
THAT BILATERAL TALKS MAKING PROGRESS SO THAT ETHIOPIA' S FRIENDS
WOULD FEEL NO NEED HEED IEG' S PLEAS FOR STRENGTHENING ETHIOPIAN
FORCES.

ADAIR UNQUOTE ROGERS

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